

Psalm 111:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

Analysis

They stand fast for ever and ever (סְמוּכִים לְעוֹלָם)—Semukhim (firmly established, supported) describes God's precepts as unshakeable and permanent. La'ad le'olam (forever and ever) uses synonymous Hebrew terms for eternity, emphasizing absolute perpetuity. This echoes Psalm 119's meditation on Torah's eternal nature and Jesus's declaration that Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35). While human institutions crumble, God's commandments remain immovable truth anchoring every generation.

And are done in truth and uprightness (עֲשָׂוָה בְּאֶתְתָּה יְשָׁרָה)—Emet (truth, faithfulness, reliability) and yashar (upright, straight, just) describe how God's laws are enacted: with complete integrity and moral perfection. God's precepts reflect His character—He commands nothing arbitrary or capricious. The verb asuyim (done, made) suggests God's laws are not mere ideas but actively established realities governing moral order. Heaven and earth may pass, but God's righteous standards endure (Matthew 5:18).

Historical Context

This verse falls within Psalm 111's acrostic structure (lines beginning with samekh and ayin). The emphasis on Torah's permanence reflects Israel's post-exilic renewal, when Ezra reestablished the law as central to national identity (Nehemiah 8). After exile threatened to dissolve Israel's distinctiveness, this psalm reaffirmed that God's commandments—not political power or territorial possession

—constitute Israel's eternal foundation. Early Christianity inherited this conviction, seeing Christ as Torah's fulfillment, not its abolition.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Scripture's eternal, unchanging nature provide stability in a culture of moral relativism?
2. What practical difference does it make to view God's commands as reflecting His character rather than arbitrary rules?
3. In what areas might you be tempted to treat God's word as culturally conditioned rather than eternally authoritative?

Interlinear Text

בָּאָמֶת	תְּשִׁוָּם	לְעוֹלָם	סְמוּךְ	יְמִין	לְעֵד	וְיִשְׁרָאֵל:
They stand fast	for ever	and ever	and are done	in truth	and uprightness	
H5564	H5703	H5769	H6213	H571	H3477	

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 5:18 (Parallel theme): For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Psalms 19:9 (Truth): The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

Revelation 15:3 (Truth): And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

Isaiah 40:8 (Parallel theme): The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

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